



California Conservation Corps Watershed Stewards Program

in partnership with AmeriCorps
WSP Applicant FAQ



General Questions

1. I am a student. Can I be in the Watershed Stewards Program while I am studying?

- The Watershed Stewards Program requires a full-time commitment (40 hours/week during regular business hours) and is not appropriate for current students.

2. Do I need to turn in all of my application materials at the same time?

- No. You can turn in your application, and then send your cover letter, resume and Letters of Recommendation (LOR) as they are ready. We expect that most people will have LORs sent in separately from their application materials. All materials must be in by the application deadline.

3. Will WSP reimburse me for the costs involved in moving to California and find housing near my Placement Site?

- No - WSP will not reimburse for these costs. However, WSP and your Placement Site will cover all cost for travel required for the program/Placement Site throughout your term.

4. Do I qualify for Cal Fresh (food stamps) as an AmeriCorps Member?

- While we cannot guarantee that you will qualify for Cal Fresh, as it is based on your household income, AmeriCorps Members often qualify for this benefit. The amount per month is dependent on the county (average \$200/month).

5. If I choose to defer my college loans while serving with WSP, will they still accrue interest?

- **Yes** – your student loans will continue to accrue interest. However, if they are *eligible loans* you can place your loans into forbearance using the MyAmeriCorps portal, and you will then be eligible to have the accrued interest paid in full at the end of your term. We will share more information about this during WSP's Orientation.

6. Am I required to have a car?

- **No/Yes** – Depending on your Placement Site location, it is strongly suggested you have a vehicle. Housing and services are often a distance from Placement Sites and public transport is not always available especially in rural areas. Some Placement Sites require Members to use their personal vehicle for field work (they will be reimbursed). If you do not have a vehicle but are interested in the program, contact wsp.recruiter@cc.ca.gov to learn which sites may be the best match.

7. Given that passing a National Criminal History Check is required to be able to enroll in the program, what type of criminal charges would prevent me from enrolling with WSP?

- a. For Corpsmember criminal history check eligibility, we do not have a list of ineligible crimes. We determine eligibility by reviewing the codes an applicant was convicted of once the criminal history check has been run. If it falls under the serious felony or violent crime section of the CA Penal Code, then they

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would not be eligible to join the CCC. A criminal conviction or subject to a pending legal action for a serious felony or violent crime as defined by California Penal Code section 667.5(c) or 1192.7(c) or any other crime determined by the CCC to be inconsistent with the mission and/or policies of the CCC or AmeriCorps. Convictions sealed under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 781 or Penal Code Section 1203.45 do not apply. CM applicants also cannot be on a parole or probation status as that would prevent them from participating in the program. You cannot be listed on the DOJ National Sex Offender Public Website or have been convicted of murder. Usually, misdemeanor convictions do not make an applicant ineligible as long as the probation terms and conditions allow you to travel out of county or out of state.

Site-Specific Interviews

1. Does my application packet get sent to all the Placement Sites I ranked in my preference list?

- **No** - your list of preferences is very helpful when we match up applicants with sites, but we do not always send your application packet to every site that you ranked. WSP staff decides which applicant packets will be sent to sites based on both the Member's interests and experience, and the site's needs.
- WSP may also send your application to sites you did not indicate as a preference if we feel you are a strong candidate and you have identified being flexible on your WSP Application.

2. Can I contact Placement Sites directly to ask Site-specific questions?

- **No** - because our program receives such a high volume of applicants each year, we ask that you communicate with WSP staff instead of directly with the Placement Sites. If you are chosen for an interview with the Placement Site, you will have an opportunity to communicate directly with them at that time.

3. Can I re-rank my preferred sites after I have interviewed with Placement Sites?

- **Yes** - you can email your updated ranking preferences to WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov any time through **July 20th, 2020**. Rankings cannot be changed after that date. Please only rank sites with which you have interviewed. If you marked flexible on your application, your materials may still be sent to additional Placement Sites for their review and a possible interview.

4. If I am offered a position, will I get to choose which Placement Site I will serve at?

- **No** - candidates are offered a specific position at one Placement Site.

5. If I am chosen for a position who will make the offer?

- WSP Staff calls applicants to offer them positions. You will have several days to accept or decline.
- It is important that you notify WSP staff of any times that you may not be available by email or phone so that we can reach you regarding an offer.

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